



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

A second study of the ICTERIDÆ.

BY JOHN CASSIN.

2. Sub-family QUISCALINÆ.

I. Genus QUISCALUS, Vieillot.

(Genus Quiscalus, Vieill., Analyse, p. 36.)

1. *Quiscalus*.1. *QUISCALUS PURPUREUS*, (Bartram).

"Gracula purpurea, Bartram," Wilson Am. Orn. iii. p. 44.

Gracula purpurea, Bartram, Trav. Florida, p. 289 (1791).

Monedula purpurea, Catesby, Carolina, i. p. 12, pl. 12.

Gracula quiscula, Linn. Syst. Nat., i. p. 109 (1758).

Oriolus ludovicianus, Gm. Syst. Nat., i. p. 387 (1788)?

Quiscalus versicolor, Vieill. Nouv. Dict., xxviii. p. 488 (1819).

Quiscalus nitens, Licht. Verz., p. 18 (1823).

Quiscalus purpuratus, Sw. Cab. Cy., p. 298 (1838).

Catesby Carolina, i. pl. 12. Vieill. Gal. i. pl. 108. Wils. Am. Orn. iii. pl.

21. Aud. B. of Am. pl. 7; oct. ed. iv. pl. 221. Bonap. Am. Orn. i. pl. 5.

One of the most abundant of the larger insectorial birds of Eastern North America, retaining its place in the most highly cultivated districts, associated in societies at all seasons, and in the migrating periods, especially in autumn, appearing in immense flocks in the Middle and Southern States. Numerous colonies remain during the summer, and rear their young within the corporate limits of Philadelphia, and resort constantly to the public squares (or parks) in the most densely populated parts of the city, for the purpose of feeding on the larvæ of insects, especially of species of Lepidoptera, which infest the trees. In some instances small parties have built nests and reared young in the public squares of this city, but this bird evidently prefers the suburbs and open country.

Bill about the length of the head, thick at base, curved at the end, edge of upper mandible generally sinuated, commissure nearly straight, but curved downwards distinctly at the point; wing moderate, with the third quill usually slightly longest, but frequently about equal to the second and fourth; tail rather long, graduated; legs and feet rather strong; claws strong and sharp. Total length $11\frac{1}{2}$ to 13 inches; wing 5 to $5\frac{1}{2}$; tail $5\frac{1}{2}$ to 6 inches.

Adult male. Entirely black, head, neck and breast with a fine steel-blue, greenish-blue or violet-blue lustre, abruptly terminated on the neck behind, extending on the breast in front, but abruptly terminated and giving place to the fine golden and bronzed violet-blue, purple and green of the abdomen, which are very nearly the same on the back and other upper parts of the body. Coverts of the wing and shorter quills with fine bronze and bluish-purple lustre, primaries narrowly edged with purple or bluish. Tail usually with a fine blue lustre, but frequently changing to green; bill and feet black.

The lustres of the plumage in this species (and in the next succeeding) change in a considerable degree in different lights, and have an almost unlimited variation in different ages and seasons, and even in individual specimens of the same age apparently, and are difficult to describe. Frequently the blue of the head and throat presents a green mixture or dominant lustre of that color; there is occasionally a well defined band on the back of the neck of a fine golden and green lustre, and also frequently a large mixture of blue in the lustres of the abdomen; and lastly, the plumage of the back and abdomen presents all these lustres with the feathers edged or tipped with fine golden, green or violet, forming a singular iridescent character.

Adult female. Smaller than the male, with the lustres of the plumage 1866.]

generally similar, but with generally a greater prevalence of green, and a paler violet lustre than in the male. Total length about $10\frac{1}{2}$ to $11\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

Young. Entirely dull brownish-black, with usually a green lustre beginning to appear on the head and breast, wings and tail.

Hab.—North America, east of the Rocky Mountains. Spec. in Mus. Acad. Philada. and Mus. Smiths. Inst. Washington.

Numerous specimens from various and widely distant localities in North America, in the Academy Museum and in the Smithsonian Museum. Kansas (Dr. W. A. Hammond), Hudson's Bay (Smithsonian), resident in Louisiana (Mr. Audubon). The figures of Wilson of the male, and of Bonaparte of the female, above cited, are very good representations of this species; those of Audubon are not, but seem to be of young or imperfect plumage.

2. *QUISCALUS AGLÆUS*, Baird.

Quiscalus aglæus, Baird, Silliman's Jour. 1866, p. 84.

Quiscalus baritus, Baird, B. of N. A. p. 556.

Baird, B. of N. A. pl. 32.

Specimens from Florida in the collection of the Smithsonian Institution. This species is allied to but distinguishable from the preceding without difficulty.

Smaller than the preceding species, with the bill comparatively longer and more slender, more gradually pointed, with the upper mandible distinctly curved downwards at the tip. Wing moderate, with the second, third and fourth quills very nearly equal; tail rather long, graduated; legs and feet strong, claws strong and sharp. Total length about $10\frac{1}{2}$ to 12 inches; wing $4\frac{3}{4}$ to $5\frac{1}{2}$; tail about 5 inches.

Adult male. Entirely black, head, neck and breast with a fine blue lustre, changing to a fine golden purple or violet, abruptly terminated on the neck behind, extending lower on the breast, and abruptly giving place to a silky green lustre on the abdomen, somewhat mixed or variegated with purple and violet. Back with nearly the same lustre as the abdomen; rump and upper tail coverts more variegated with golden green, violet and blue. External wing coverts with fine blue lustre, changing to green, and frequently tipped and edged with golden-green and violet. Shorter quills with fine blue lustre changing to green. Primaries narrowly edged with bluish or green. Tail with a fine green lustre; bill and feet black.

Hab.—Florida; Bahama Islands? Spec. in Mus. Smiths. Inst.

In this species the lustres of the plumage seem to be more uniform, or much less changeable or broken than in the preceding; and in all the specimens now under examination the shorter quills have a nearly uniform fine blue lustre, changing to green, and more uniform than in the preceding, and the tail has a green instead of blue lustre. These characters of the plumage, and the smaller size and longer bill, furnish characters at once available for the easy recognition of this species. It is strictly of the same subgeneric group as the preceding, and the two are the only species known to me which present variegated and iridescent lustres of plumage. The two species form a subgroup which I regard as typical *Quiscalus*.

2. *Holoquiscalus*.

All the species of this subgroup, known to me, are black, with purple or violet lustre of various shades in different species, wings and tail uniformly with greenish lustre. In any one species the lustre is nearly uniform on all parts of the head and body. These species inhabit the West Indies and the continent of America as far north as Mexico.

In the large collection of *Quiscalinæ* in the Museum of the Smithsonian Institution, from the West Indies, in which the localities are most carefully and accurately stated in the labels by Professor Baird, I have not succeeded in finding any one species from more than one of the larger Islands. In other

[Dec.

words, it is my conclusion that at least the larger Islands,—Cuba, Jamaica, St. Domingo and Porto Rico,—are each inhabited by a distinct species. That of Trinidad seems to be the same species inhabiting South America.

3. *QUISCALUS BARITUS*, (Linnæus).

Gracula barita, Linn. Syst. Nat. i. p. 165 (1766).

Monedula tota nigra, Sloane Nat. Hist. Jamaica, ii. p. 299.

Icterus niger, Briss. Orn. ii. p. 103.

Sturnus jamaicensis, Daud. Tr. d'Orn. ii. p. 317 (1800).

Merops niger, iride subargentea, Brown Nat. Hist. Jamaica, p. 476.

Quiscalus crassirostris, Swains. Cab. Cy. p. 355 (1838).

Quiscalula vulgaris, Temm. Pl. Col. Tab. Meth. p. 10 (1838)?

Sloane's Jamaica, pl. 257, fig. 2. Brisson Orn. ii. pl. 10, fig. 1. Gosse B. of Jamaica, pl. 53.

1. *Gracula barita* is a name given by Linnæus in the 10th edition of Syst. Nat. i. p. 109 (1758), and he probably describes from a specimen collected by Dr. Rolander, whose name he mentions, without citing any work or manuscript and without giving locality, other than "*Habitat in Americæ Musis, cuius fructus deustat.* Rolander," which, being interpreted, means that the locality is in those parts of America where plants of the genus *Musa* (the plantain and banana) flourish. The description, very probably, is that of a bird in plumage not mature, but of this group, and is applicable with about equal propriety to the young of any species of the subgroup here indicated as *Holoquiscalus*. Dr. Rolander visited Guiana and the Island of St. Eustatius, but published nothing relating to his ornithological collections, to my knowledge. It is impossible to determine the species or the locality from Syst. Nat. 10th edition, or in any other manner in especial relation to that edition, of which the present writer is cognizant.

2. But in the 12th édition Syst. Nat. the case assumes much greater facility. In this edition, i. p. 165 (1766), Linnæus cites as synonymes "*Icterus niger*; Briss. Av. 2, p. 103, t. 10 f. i." and "*Monedula tota nigra*, Sloane Jam. 2, p. 299, t. 257, f. 2. Raj. av. 185, n. 28."

3. Brisson, in Orn. ii. p. 103, under the name *Icterus niger*, describes specimens in the collection of M. de Reaumer, from Jamaica and St. Domingo: "On le trouve à la Jamaïque et à St. Domingue d'ou il été envoyé à M. de Reaumer par M. Chervain." He gives as a synonym "*Monedula tota nigra*," Sloane, as above cited, who described, of course, from specimens obtained in "the hot and distant Island of Jamaica," and, whatever the St. Domingo bird may be, Brisson also describes and figures that of Jamaica, now well known, and usually called *Q. crassirostris*.

Sturnus jamaicensis is a name given by Daudin to the bird described under the name "*Merops niger, iride sub-argentea*," by Dr. Patrick Brown, in Nat. Hist. Jamaica, p. 476, which is undoubtedly this bird. Daudin is in error, however, when he gives "*Monedula tota nigra*," Sloane, as a different bird, though he is quite correct in applying to it the name *Gracula barita*, Linn. (Daud. Tr. d'Orn. ii. p. 320.)

There is, in my opinion, sufficient evidence that this species of Jamaica is properly to be regarded as entitled to the name *Quiscalus baritus*, (Linn.) In late authors this name has usually been applied to the species from Cuba, which has no claim whatever. The present bird is stated to inhabit also St. Domingo by Mr. Gosse, in Birds of Jamaica, p. 220, but I have seen no specimens of it from that Island, nor from elsewhere than Jamaica.

Numerous specimens of this species are in the collection of the Smithsonian Institution and in the Academy Museum, and are exclusively from Jamaica. It is rather the largest of the group inhabiting the West Indies and has the bill thick in both mandibles, curved in its terminal half, commissure inflexed and curved at the end of the bill; wing long, third and fourth quills longest and nearly equal; tail long, graduated; legs and feet strong. Male larger than the female.

1866.]

Adult male. Black, head and body with dark purple lustre, uniform above and below, and frequently changing to greenish on the rump, upper tail coverts and abdomen. Wings and tail above with green lustre; bill and feet black (with a brownish tinge in dried specimens). Total length about 12 to 12½ inches, wings 6, tail 5½ inches.

Adult female. Similar to the male in color and general lustres of plumage but usually with the latter more tinged with green. Much smaller than the male, total length about 10 inches, wing 5, tail 4¾ inches.

Habitat.—Jamaica. Spec. in Mus. Acad., Philada., and Mus. Smith. Inst., Washington.

4. *QUISCALUS GUNDLACHII*, nobis.

"*Quiscalus barytus*, Vieill," D'Orbigny, De Sagras Cuba, Ois. p. 120.

"*Chalcophanes Baritus*, Wagl." Gundlach, Cab. Jour. 1856, p. 15.

De Sagra's Cuba, Aves, pl. 18.

Numerous specimens in the Smiths. Mus. and in the Acad. Mus., exclusively from Cuba. This species is but little smaller than the preceding, the bill is more slender and more gradually pointed and the tail seems to be comparatively longer. The color of the head and body in the Cuba bird presents a more decided purple or violet lustre than in that of Jamaica, and the under parts have a fine golden purple lustre quite wanting in the species of that Island.

Similar in form and general lustres of plumage to the immediately preceding, but rather smaller; bill more pointed and more gradually tapering; tail comparatively longer. Bill longer than the head, gradually curved and pointed; wing moderate with the third and fourth quills usually longest, but frequently about the same length as the second; tail rather long, graduated, the feathers wide; legs and feet strong; claws curved, sharp. Total length about 11½ to 12 inches, wing about 6, tail 5¾ to 6¼ inches.

Adult male. Black, head and body above with a fine purple or violet lustre; under parts with a fine golden purple lustre; wings and tail above with a green lustre; smaller wing coverts purple changing to greenish; tibiae and under tail coverts greenish; bill and feet black,

Female. Smaller. The specimens now under examination are not sufficient to be reliable in either the lustres of the plumage or dimensions in the female. Those which I regard as females are very similar to the males in lustres of plumage, and there does not appear to be so much difference in the sizes of the two sexes as in the species of Jamaica.

Hab.—Cuba. Spec. in Mus. Acad., Philadelphia, and Mus. Smiths. Inst., Washington.

It is with great gratification that I name this species in testimony of my high estimation of Dr. John Gundlach, a most excellent and accurate naturalist, who has with great ability studied and made known especially the ornithology of the Island of Cuba. The researches of this gentleman have in fact been of the greatest value in the Natural History of that Island.

5. *QUISCALUS BRACHYPTERUS*, nobis.

Numerous specimens in the collection of the Smithsonian Institution from Porto Rico.

This species resembles those from the Islands of Jamaica and Cuba, *Q. baritus*, *Q. Gundlachii*, especially the latter, but is smaller, with the bill more slender; the tail shorter, and the wing disproportionately shorter. The last character is the most immediately available in distinguishing from either of those species. This bird is larger than either of the succeeding in this memoir.

Bill about the length of the head, gradually tapering and curved at the tip; wing short, third and fourth quills longest; tail moderate or rather long; legs and feet strong.

Adult male. Black, the entire plumage of the head and body with a dark purple and violet lustre; wings and tail above frequently with a pale greenish

[Dec.

lustre, but quite generally purplish or lustrous black. Bill and feet black. Total length about 11 inches, wing 5, tail $4\frac{1}{2}$ to 5 inches.

Adult female. Similar to the male in colors, but smaller; total length about $9\frac{1}{2}$ to 10 inches, wing $4\frac{1}{2}$, tail 4 inches.

Hab.—Porto Rico. Spec. in Mus. Smiths. Inst., and Mus. Acad., Philada.

Sixteen specimens of this species are in the Smiths. Mus. from the Island of Porto Rico and one specimen from the Massena collection without label, in the Acad. Mus. It resembles other species of this group in colors and lustres of plumage, being most nearly related to those above mentioned from Jamaica and Cuba, with which it has usually been confounded. It is distinguishable without difficulty, on examination, by its short wings and tail. This is undoubtedly the species alluded to under the name "*Quiscalus barita*," by Mr. E. C. Taylor in Ibis, 1864, p. 168, and stated by him to be very abundant in Porto Rico.

6. *QUISCALUS NIGER*, (Boddaert.)

Oriolus niger, Bodd. Tab. Pl. Enl. p. 31, (1783.)

Troupiale noir, de St. Domingue, Buffon, (name on plate.)

Le Troupiale noir, Buff. Pl. Enl. iii., p. 241.

Buff. Pl. Enl. 534.

Specimens of both sexes in the Smiths. Mus. from the Island of St. Domingo or Hayti, and distinct specifically from either of the preceding or any other species known to me. This is, in my opinion, undoubtedly the bird figured by Buffon as cited above, but not with entire success, the tail not being sufficiently "étagée," though so described in his text. This figure is about the size of the female; the bill and feet are too lightly colored. It probably represents the female in plumage not mature.

This species is smaller than either of the preceding, the male being rather smaller than the female of the Cuba species, *Q. Gundlachii*, and the female (in this species) much smaller than the male. The bill is straight, and gradually pointed, not curved, more slender than in either of the preceding, and the commissure nearly straight; wing moderate, third and fourth quills longest and nearly even; tail rather long, graduated; legs and feet rather strong. Easily distinguished from either of the preceding by its straight, sharp bill.

Adult male. Black, head and body with a dark purple lustre nearly uniform above and below; wings and tail above with a green lustre. Bill and feet bluish black. Total length about $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches, wing 5, tail $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

Adult female. Similar to the male in color and lustres of plumage. Smaller, total length about 9 inches, wing $4\frac{1}{2}$, tail 4 inches.

Hab.—St. Domingo. "Jeremie." Spec. in Mus. Smiths. Inst., Washington.

7. *QUISCALUS INFLEXIROSTRIS*, Swainson.

Quiscalus inflexirostris, Swains. Cab. Cy. p. 300, (1838.)

Cab. Cy. fig. 52, (wood cut.)

One specimen only in the Acad. Mus. seems to be this species, but which is, unfortunately, without label stating locality. The bill is exactly the length and otherwise very nearly as given by Mr. Swainson as cited above, though somewhat thicker. It is the only specimen that I have ever seen in which the commissure is an uninterrupted curve or arc of a circle,—not straight nor sinuated as in all other species known to me (except *Q. niger* of St. Domingo) and described in this memoir. It is apparently adult, but probably in not quite mature plumage.

Male nearly adult? Bill rather longer than the head, curved, the upper and under mandibles nearly equal in thickness, commissure curved and the edges of both mandibles inflexed; wing moderate, second, third and fourth quills longest and very nearly equal; tail moderate or rather long, graduated; legs and feet strong. Total length about 10 inches, wing 5, tail $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches, tarsus about $1\frac{1}{2}$, chord of upper mandible about one and four-fifths inches.

Black, entire plumage of head and body with a dark purple lustre; wings 1866.]

externally with a green lustre. In the present specimen, which is probably not fully mature, the tail is plain black. Bill and feet black, the latter (feet) brownish; claws strong, brownish black.

Hab.—Unknown. Spec. in Mus. Acad., Philadelphia, from the Massena collection.

The lustres of the plumage in this species are generally similar to those of all the other species of the sub-group here designated *Holoquiscalus*, but the purple is rather darker than in either. The specimen now described is probably not mature in plumage, and the lustres of the plumage, therefore, not entirely reliable as characters.

Of all the specimens that I have seen of *Quiscali*, this comes the nearest to Mr. Swainson's description and figure of *Q. inflexirostris*, and in fact there is no other that I can suspect as possibly that species, on account of the peculiarly curved bill. No locality is known to me, and at this time I do not remember ever having seen the species mentioned by any writer since Swainson.

8. QUISCALUS LUGUBRIS, Swainson.

Quiscalus lugubris, Swains. Cab. Cy. p. 299, (1838.)

Chalcophanes minor, Cabanis Mus. Hein. i., p. 297, (1851)?

Cab. Cy. fig. 54 c.

This is another of the species of this difficult group, with the lustres of the plumage uniform purple on the head and body, and green on the wings and tail. It is rather smaller than the species immediately preceding (*Q. inflexirostris*) and decidedly smaller than all others preceding. Specimens from Trinidad and South America in the Acad. Mus., Philada.

Adult male. Bill about the length of the head, commissure nearly straight, but rather abruptly curved at the point; wing rather long, third and fourth quills longest and nearly equal; tail rather long, graduated; legs and feet strong. Total length about $9\frac{1}{2}$ to 10 inches, wing $4\frac{1}{2}$ to $4\frac{3}{4}$, tail 4 to $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

Black, entire plumage of the head and body with a rich purple or violet lustre tinged with golden; shorter wing coverts or shoulders purple; wings and tail and upper and under tail coverts with a green lustre; bill and feet black.

Hab.—South America. Island of Trinidad. Spec. in Mus. Acad., Philada.

The largest specimen now before me is from Trinidad, all the measurements of which are rather larger than as given by Mr. Swainson in his description, as above cited. The smallest is probably from Brazil, and is that which at present I regard as described by Dr. Cabanis as *C. minor* as above. In all the species of this group, of which I have series of specimens, there is some diversity of size, and, finding no other appreciable character than this diversity in the specimens now under examination, I regard them as one species. This bird seems to be the most common species of South America and of the Island of Trinidad.

9. QUISCALUS MEXICANUS, nobis.

A single specimen in the Acad. Mus., selected with other birds from a large collection made in Mexico by M. Bruzin, is different from either of the preceding species. It is one of the smaller species and most resembles the immediately preceding (*Q. lugubris*), but is rather larger and has the bill much stronger and more curved. Its colors and lustres are nearly the same as that species, but seem to be of a richer golden-purple lustre on the under parts (as in some species of *Molothrus* and in *Q. Gundlachii* of Cuba.)

Adult male. Bill longer than the head, thick, curved, especially in the terminal third of its length; wing moderate, second and third quills longest; tail moderate, graduated; legs and feet strong. Total length $9\frac{3}{4}$ to $10\frac{1}{4}$ inches, wing $4\frac{1}{2}$, tail $4\frac{1}{4}$ to $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

Black, entire plumage of the head and body with a rich golden purple or violet lustre, especially on the neck behind and breast; shoulders bluish purple; wings and tail and under tail coverts with green lustre; the upper tail coverts

[Dec.

also show a green lustre in some lights, but are tinged also with purple; bill and feet black.

Hab.—Mexico. Spec. in Mus. Acad., Philada.

10. *QUISCALUS RECTIROSTRIS*, nobis.

This is a small species, of which one specimen is in Acad. Mus. without label stating locality. It is quite distinct from any other, though of the same general colors or lustres of plumage and is strongly characterized by its straight, slender and sharp bill. It is smaller than either of the preceding, though the present specimen may be a female.

Bill straight or very slightly curved at the tip, slender, gradually tapering, pointed, under mandible rather the thicker, commissure straight, edges inflexed; wing moderate, third and fourth quills longest and nearly equal; tail rather long, graduated; legs and feet moderate; claws curved, sharp. The tail is scarcely as long, proportionately, as in other species of this sub-group, and the legs, toes and claws rather more slender. Total length about $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches, wing $4\frac{1}{2}$, tail 4 inches. Female?

Adult? Black, entire plumage with a dark purple lustre very slightly changing to greenish on the wings and tail. Bill and feet black. In the specimen now described the shorter quills and wing coverts have the same purple lustre as the body, while the edges of the primaries have a faint green lustre scarcely preceptible, in which character this bird is peculiar in this sub-group. In this specimen the under mandible is pale at the base, and the quills on their under surface have a brownish tinge.

Hab.—Unknown. Spec. in Mus. Acad., Philada.

This is a quite peculiar species, easily recognized amongst the birds described in this memoir, by its straight slender bill. It seems also to have more slender legs and feet and perhaps rather shorter tail than usual, though these characters are scarcely to be relied on in prepared and dried specimens. The entire plumage in mature age, has, I suspect, an entirely uniform dark purple lustre, including wings and tail, or perhaps slightly greenish on those parts only.

The seven species last above given (Nos. 3. to 10 of this memoir) are all that I consider myself justified in regarding as entitled to be established and belonging to this sub-group, which I have designated *Holoquiscalus*. In the Academy Museum, however, there are several specimens in plumage not mature, but probably of this sub-group, which I cannot refer to either of these species and my present opinion is that there are other species yet unknown.

3. *Megaquiscalus*.

The species of this sub-group are the largest of the genus *Quiscalus*. They are easily recognized by their size, robust organization and long and graduated tails.

11. *QUISCALUS MAJOR*, Vieillot.

Quiscalus major, Vieill. Nouv. Dict. xxviii., p. 487, (1819.)

Gracula quiscula, Bartr. Trav. p. 290.

Gracula barita, Wils. Am. Orn. vi., p. viii.

Quiscalus corvinus, Swains. Cab. Cy. p. 300, (1838.)

Bonap. Am. Orn. i. pl. 4. Aud. B. of Am. pl. 187, Oct. ed. iv., pl. 220.

Numerous specimens from Georgia, South Carolina and other States and localities in southern North America are in the Acad. Mus. and also in the Mus. Smiths. Specimens in Mr. Xantus' collection from Colima, Western Mexico, seem to be this species, though not in mature plumage and may be nearly allied only.

Form rather lengthened but robust; bill strong, about the length of the head; wing rather long, second and third quills usually longest, though the 1866.]

first four quills are frequently nearly equal; tail long, graduated, lateral feathers about $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches shorter than the central; legs and feet strong.

Adult male. Black, head and neck with a fine purple lustre, rather abruptly defined on the lower part of the neck behind and succeeded by a fine green lustre which passes into a purple or steel blue on the lower back and upper tail coverts. On the under parts the purple lustre of the head and neck passes more gradually into green on the abdomen; under tail coverts usually purplish blue, frequently plain black. Smaller wing coverts with green lustre; larger coverts greenish bronzed; quills frequently plain black, with a greenish or bronzed edging and slight lustre. Tail usually with a slight bluish or greenish lustre, frequently plain black. Bill and feet black. Iris yellow. Total length about 15 inches, wing 7, tail $6\frac{1}{2}$ to 7 inches.

Adult female. Smaller. Upper parts dark brown, lighter on the head and neck behind; darker and nearly a dull black on the lower part of the back and upper tail coverts; under parts lighter, dull yellowish brown; tibiae and under tail coverts darker; wings and tail dull brownish black; upper parts frequently with a slight greenish lustre. Total length about $12\frac{1}{2}$ inches, wing $5\frac{1}{2}$ to 6, tail $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

Hab.—Southern North America. Spec. in Mus. Acad., Philada., and Mus. Smiths. Inst., Washington.

12. *QUISCALUS ASSIMILIS*, Sclater.

Quiscalus assimilis, Sclater, Cat. Am. Birds, p. 141, (1862.)

"*Q. nitenti-niger*, capite undique cum pectore purpurascens: long. tota in mari 13·0, alæ 6·7, caudæ 7·0, in fæm. 10·0, alæ 5·2, caudæ 5·3, poll. Angl. et dec."

"Obs. Affiniss. *Q. majori*, sed crassitie minore et colore magis violaceo distinguenda." Sclater, as above.

Hab.—Bogota. Spec. in coll. Dr. Sclater, London.

This species I have not seen.

13. *QUISCALUS MACROURUS*, Swainson.

Quiscalus macrourus, Swains. Cab. Cy., p. 299, (1838.)

"*Quiscalus caudatus*," Name on specimen in Massena collection.

Baird B. of N. A. pl. 58. Rept. U. S. and Mex. Bound. Surv. pl. 20.

Specimens from Texas, Panama and Vera Paz in the Acad. Mus. and from Texas, Mexico, Yucatan, Guatemala, and Turbo, and Carthagena, New Grenada, in Mus. Smiths. Inst. In the large number of the Smithsonian collection, probably representing all ages and stages of plumage, there is some variation in size and in the shades or lustres of apparently adult males, but I have not determined reliable characters for more than one species. This bird seems to inhabit all of Central America and the adjacent countries of both North and South America.

The largest species of this genus. Form lengthened but robust; bill strong, longer than the head; wing long, third quill usually longest; tail long, graduated, outer feathers three to five inches shorter than those in the middle; legs and feet strong.

Adult male. Black, head, neck, back and entire under parts with a fine bluish purple lustre; lower part of back and the upper tail coverts and also the abdomen and under tail coverts frequently with green lustre, though in specimens apparently not fully adult those parts are sometimes bluish bronze, inclining to dark steel blue. Wings and tail with a slight purplish lustre, smaller coverts with bluish green and larger coverts with greenish bronzed lustre. Bill and feet black. Iris yellow. Total length $17\frac{1}{2}$ to 20 inches, wing about 8, tail 8 to $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

Female. Smaller, and generally resembling the female of *Q. major*, but darker colored above. Entire upper parts dark brown, nearly black and with a green lustre on the back; wings and tail dull brownish black. Under parts light, dull yellowish brown; paler on the throat and with a trace of narrow

[Dec.

dark line from each side of the lower mandible. Tibiae and under tail coverts dark brown. Total length about 13 inches, wing 6, tail $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

Hab.—Southern North America and Central America. Spec. in. Mus. Acad., Philada., and Mus. Smiths. Inst., Washington.

14. *QUISCALUS TENUIROSTRIS*, Swainson.

Quiscalus tenuirostris, Swains. Cab. Cy. p. 299, (1838.)

"*Quiscalus orizivorus*." Name on spec. in Massena collection.

Swains. Cab. Cy., fig. 51, b. c.

Specimens in Acad. Mus., without labels, from the Massena collection and one specimen from Mexico in the Smiths. Mus., undoubtedly of this species and clearly distinct from either of the preceding. The females are much lighter colored than those of either *Q. major* or *Q. macrourus*, and easily to be distinguished, and in this species the slender bill is a strong and apparently reliable character. It is carefully given by Mr. Swainson as above cited, and his description is quite sufficient for the identification of the species.

About the size of *Q. major*; form lengthened and not so robust as in either of the preceding; bill much more slender, nearly straight; wing long, third quill longest; tail long, graduated, outer feathers about 3 inches shorter than those in the middle of the tail; feet and claws more slender than in the preceding species.

Adult male. Black, the entire plumage with a fine purple lustre inclining to steel blue on the wing coverts and upper tail coverts. Wings and tail with a slight bluish lustre. Bill and feet black. Total length about 15 inches, wing $6\frac{1}{2}$ to 7, tail 8 inches.

Female. Generally resembling the females of the preceding two species, but much lighter colored. Head above and neck behind light brown, inclining to chestnut or bay color; back, wings and tail dark brown, or nearly brownish black. Under parts light, dull yellowish brown, much paler on the throat; tibiae and under tail coverts dark brown. Total length about 11 to 12 inches, wing $5\frac{1}{2}$, tail $5\frac{1}{2}$ to 6 inches.

Hab.—Mexico. Spec. in Mus. Acad., Philada., and Smiths. Inst., Washington.

This is an entirely respectable species, though apparently not much known to naturalists. It belongs strictly to the sub-group of *Quiscalus* to which the name *Megaquiscalus* is given in this memoir, all the species of which are characterized by their large size and long tails. This bird is easily recognized by its slender bill, and in the adult male the lustre appears to be nearly uniform purple with little change or variation in any exposure to the light. The female can easily be distinguished from that of either of the preceding by its lighter colors, and especially by the quite different color of the head above and neck behind. In one female specimen in the Massena collection the throat might be described as dull yellowish white, and the entire under parts of the body but little darker. One female specimen in the Mus. Smiths., undoubtedly from Mexico, clearly determines the locality of this species.

15. *QUISCALUS PALUSTRIS*, (Swainson.)

Scaphidurus palustris, Swains. Philos. Mag., 1827, p. 437.

In one of the interesting and valuable collections from North Western Mexico, sent to the Smithsonian Institution by Col. A. J. Grayson, late of the United States Army, I am greatly gratified to find two specimens of a species quite unknown to me previously, and which seem to be the Mexican bird described by Swainson as above cited. These specimens are not in adult plumage and are not quite so large as the dimensions given, but they are evidently assuming the colors as given in the description, and I have no doubt are the species. From Mazatlan, Mexico.

Mr. Swainson's description is: "Glossy blue black; thighs brown; bill slender, commissure straight; legs slender; claws long, slightly curved. Total length 15 inches, bill 1 7-10, wing $6\frac{1}{2}$, tail $7\frac{1}{2}$, tarsi $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches."

"Inhabits the marshes and borders of the lakes round Mexico in flocks. M.

1866.]

Vieillot's name for this group, *Quiscalus*, being already used in botany, I propose to call it *Scaphidurus*, as expressive of the singular boat-shaped tail common to most, if not all, of the species."

The specimens now before me are probably very nearly full grown, but have not entirely assumed the "glossy blue black," though that color is plainly superseding the immature plumage. The brown of the *tibiæ* is to be seen in both specimens.

Both of Col. Grayson's specimens are males. About the size of *Q. major*; wing rather shorter; tail long; bill thick, nearly straight, slightly curved at the point; legs and feet strong.

Hab.—Mazatlan, Mexico. Spec. in Mus. Smiths. Inst., Washington.

16. *QUISCALUS PERUVIANUS*, Swainson.

Quiscalus Peruvianus, Swains. Cab. Cy. p. 354 (1838).

"Bill one inch and a-half long. Plumage glossy purple on the head and neck, changing to green on the body beneath; back, wings and tail black, with an obscure greenish gloss. Total length about $13\frac{1}{2}$ inches; bill from the gap $1\frac{7}{10}$, front $1\frac{1}{2}$, wings $7\frac{1}{4}$, tail from the base $7\frac{3}{4}$, tarsus nearly 2, middle toe and claw $1\frac{7}{10}$, hinder claws $1\frac{3}{4}$. Commissure of the bill slightly sinuated in the middle. The purple of the head and part of the neck gradually becomes steel blue on the breast, and then assumes a greenish tinge on the interscapulars and under part of the body. The greater wing coverts, quills, back, rump, and tail are almost entirely glossy black."

"Inhabits Peru. Mr. W. Hooker's collection, Mus. Nost."

This is Mr. Swainson's description, as above cited. This species I have not seen, though it is given in Mr. Jules Verreaux's Catalogue of the Baron Lafresnaye's collection, recently presented to the Boston Natural History Society by Dr. Henry Bryant, but which, I regret to say, I have not examined.

4. *Hypopyrrhus*.

(Genus *Hypopyrrhus*, Bonap. Consp. Av. p. 425.)

17. *QUISCALUS PYROHYPOGASTER*, (De Tarragon).

Cassicus pyrohypogaster, De Tarr., Rev. Zool. 1847, p. 252.

"*Agelaius pyrrhogaster*, (Tarrag.)" Gray Gen. iii. app. p. 15.

General form robust, plumage of the head with acicular feathers, and somewhat rigid; wing moderate, third and fourth quills longest; tail rather long, rounded; legs and feet rather short, strong; bill about the length of the head, thick at base, curved slightly at the point. Wide abdominal transverse band and under tail coverts bright scarlet, all other parts of the plumage black. Acicular feathers of the head and throat lustrous, but other parts plain black. A few axillary feathers scarlet. Bill and feet brownish-black.

Total length about 11 inches, wing $5\frac{1}{4}$, tail $5\frac{1}{4}$ inches.

Hab.—Northern South America; New Grenada. Spec. in Mus. Acad. Phila.

This singular bird is easily recognized by its scarlet abdominal band and under tail coverts, and plain black general plumage. It is evidently of this group, but possibly entitled to generic distinction.

II. Genus *SCOLECOPHAGUS* Swainson.

(Genus *Scolecophagus*, Swains. Faun. Bor. Am. ii. p. 494.)

1. *Scolecophagus*.

1. *SCOLECOPHAGUS FERRUGINEUS*, (Gmelin).

Oriolus ferrugineus, et *niger*, Gm. Syst. Nat. i. p. 393 (1788).

Turdus hudsonius, et *labradorius*, Gm. Syst. Nat. i. p. 818, 832 (1788).

Pendulinus ater, Vieill. Nouv. Dict. v. p. 320 (1816).

Wilson Am. Orn. iii. pl. 21. Aud. B. of Am. pl. 157; oct. ed. iv. pl. 222.

An abundant species of Eastern North America, specimens of which are

[Dec.

common in collections, but of considerable variation in colors in plumages not mature. Tail of moderate length, rounded at the end; wing rather long, pointed, second quill longest; bill shorter than the head, much more slender than in *Quiscalus*, pointed; legs and feet rather strong; claws slender, sharp.

Adult male. Black, with greenish-purple lustre on the head and body, especially on the under parts, wings and coverts, rump, upper and under tail coverts; abdomen and tail with green lustre. The green lustre frequently extends over the back or entire upper parts of the body. Plumage usually more or less edged and tipped with ferruginous, especially in autumn, which frequently is so strongly marked as to give the prevailing color. Total length 9 to 9½ inches, wing 4½, tail 4 inches.

Female. Dark plumbeous or ashy-black; wings and tail with green lustre. Back usually with a greenish lustre; quills usually edged with ferruginous. Smaller than the male. Total length about 8 inches; wing 4½, tail 3½ inches.

Young. Head and body dull ferruginous; paler on the under parts; stripe over the eye pale dull ochre; wings and tail black, with greenish lustre.

Hab.—Eastern North America. Spec. in Mus. Acad. Philada. and Mus. Smiths. Inst. Washington.

2. *Euphagus*.

2. *SCOLECOPHAGUS CYANOCEPHALUS*, (Wagler).

Psarocolius cyanocephalus, Wagl. Isis, 1829, p. 758.

Scolecophagus mexicanus, Swains. Cab. Cy. p. 302 (1838).

Quiscalus Breweri, Aud. B. of Am., oct. ed. vii. p. 345 (1843).

Aud. B. of Am., oct. ed. vii. pl. 492.

This is a common species of Central and Western North America and Mexico, of which numerous specimens are in the Smiths. Mus. and Acad. Mus.

Bill shorter than the head, thick at the base, conical, pointed; wing long, pointed, second quill longest; tail moderate, rounded; legs and feet rather slender. Total about 9½ to 10 inches; wing 5 to 5½, tail 4½ to 4½ inches. Sexes nearly of the same size.

Adult male. Black, head only with bluish violet or purple lustre, all other parts with fine green lustre; bill and feet black.

Female. Dull brown, with a plumbeous tinge, lighter on the head and breast, and frequently tinged with rusty or dull yellowish; back darker: tail and wings generally with greenish lustre. The young of both sexes have nearly the entire plumage dull rusty brown, especially the head and under parts of the body, but more as a color of the plumage, as in *Molothrus*, than with the feathers merely edged, as in *S. ferrugineus*.

Hab.—Central and Western North America, Texas, Mexico. Spec. in Mus. Acad. Philada. and Mus. Smiths. Inst. Washington.

3. *Dives*.

3. *SCOLECOPHAGUS DIVES*, (Bonaparte).

Lamprosar dives, Bonap. Consp. Av. i. p. 425 (1850).

"*L. Dives*, Caban.," Bonap. ut supra.

Lamprosar dives, Cabanis, Mus. Hein. i. p. 194 (1851)?

Quiscalus Sumichrasti, De Saussure, Rev. et Mag. Zool. 1859, p. 119.

Rev. et Mag. Zool. 1859, pl. 3, fig. 2, 3.

Apparently an abundant species of Mexico and Central America, of which numerous specimens are in the Smiths. Mus. and Mus. Acad.

Bill about the length of the head, straight, thick, pointed; wing moderate or rather short, third, fourth and fifth quills longest, and generally nearly equal; tail moderate, rounded; legs and feet strong.

Adult male. Black, with a weak greenish lustre in the entire plumage. Bill and feet black. Many specimens would be regarded properly as only shining black, the green lustre being scarcely perceptible. Total length 11 to 12 inches; wing 5, tail 5 inches.

1866.]

Female. Smaller; total length 10 to 10½ inches. Colors quite similar to those of the male, but of rather duller black.

Hab.—Mexico, Central America. Spec. in Mus. Acad. Philada. (since about 1840!) and Mus. Smiths. Inst. Washington.

4. *SCOLECOPHAGUS ATROVIOLOACEUS*, D'Orbigny.

Quiscalus atrovioleaceus, D'Orb. La Sagra's Cuba, Orn. p. 121 (1839).

La Sagra's Cuba, Aves, pl. 19.

Apparently confined to the Island of Cuba. This is another of the robust species, with the bill short and thick, and tail of moderate length and rounded at the end.

About the size of, and general form very similar to the last species (*S. Dives*), but with the wing longer (and lustre of plumage entirely different). Bill strong, thick at base, and rather abruptly tapering, pointed; wing moderate, third and fourth quills longest; tail rather long, rounded; legs and feet strong.

Adult male. Black, the head and entire body above and below with rich violet or purple lustre; wings and tail with green lustre. Shorter quills edged with violet, smaller wing coverts violet, greater coverts and quills edged with green. Bill and feet black. The entire plumage having a fine silky character. Total length 10 to 10½ inches; wing 5½, tail 4½ inches.

Female. Smaller; total length about 9 to 9½ inches. Black, with the lustres of the plumage very nearly as in the male.

Hab.—Cuba. Spec. in Mus. Acad. Philada. and Mus. Smiths. Inst. Washington.

5. *SCOLECOPHAGUS ÆQUATORIALIS* (Sclater.)

Quiscalus æquatorialis, Sclat. Cat. Am. Birds, p. 140, (1861.)

"*Ps. cayennensis*. Amer. Merid." Label in Massena coll.

One specimen from the Massena collection in the Acad. Mus. seems to be this species, though not in all particulars corresponding with Dr. Sclater's diagnosis, as above cited. It is smaller than either of the preceding species of the subgroup herein designated *Dives*.

"*Q. nigrosericeus unicolor, æneo-nitens, alis intus brunnescentioribus*; long. tota 9·5, alæ 4·4, caudæ 3·8, rostri a rictu 1·05, poll. et dec. Angl. ♀ mari sim. sed minor."

"Obs. Affinis speciei præc. (*Q. Sumichrasti*) et quoad formam similis, sed crassitie minore."

"*Hab.*—Babahoyo." (Sclater, as above.)

III. Genus *IDIOPSAR*, nobis.

In the collection of the Smithsonian Institution I find a specimen of a very interesting and singular bird, evidently *Icterine*, and allied to *Quiscalus* and *Scolecophagus*, but not to be referred with any considerable degree of propriety to either of those or to any other genus of this group. The tail is short, nearly even at the end, and emarginate, and the wings long. General form short and compact, bill about the length of the head, strong, slightly curved, with the commissure much inflexed in both mandibles, culmen distinct. Legs and feet moderate.

1. *IDIOPSAR BRACHYURUS*, nobis.

Entire plumage of the head and body bluish cinereous or plumbeous, darker on the upper parts and lighter on the under parts, nearly white at the base of the under mandible, quills dark ashy brown, primaries edged externally with light ashy nearly white; tail feathers dark brown, nearly black, edged with light ashy. Lower abdomen or ventral region light ashy nearly white. Bill dark horn color, under mandible lighter, especially at the base. Tarsi and toes light brown.

Total length about 7½ inches, wing 4, tail 2¾, bill 1 inch.

Hab.—Bolivia. "*La Paz*." Mus. Smiths. Inst. Collected and presented by Mr. D. K. Cartter.

[Dec.

IV. Genus POTAMOPSAR, Sclater.

(Subgenus Potamopsar, Sclater, Cat. Am. Birds, p. 141.)

1. POTAMOPSAR MINOR (Spix.)

Icterus minor, Spix Av. Bras. i. p. 67 (1824.)

Spix Av. Bras. 1 pl. 63, fig. 2.

Frontal feathers short, erect and rigid. Bill shorter than the head, rather slender, and abruptly tapering, pointed; wing rather short, third, fourth and fifth quills longest and nearly equal; tail rather long, graduated; legs and feet moderate, or rather slender.

Total length about 9 inches, wing 4, tail 4 inches.

Adult male. Entirely bluish black, with little or no lustre and nearly uniform on all parts, including the wings and tail. Bill and feet black.

Hab.—Rio Napo (Mr. Lawrence), Rio Javarri (Mr. J. Verreaux).

It is perhaps expedient to follow Dr. Sclater in regarding this bird as *Icterus minor*, Spix, as above cited, but neither the figure nor description of that author will quite establish its claims satisfactorily. If really the species of Spix, it is one of his worst figures and descriptions, which is saying much!

This is a rare species in American collections, the only specimens that I have seen being one in the Smiths. Mus., from Mr. Verreaux, labelled "Rio Javarri," and another, in my friend Mr. Lawrence's collection, labelled "Rio Napo," both undoubtedly correct.

V. Genus CASSIDIX, Lesson.

Genus Cassidix, Less. Traite d'Orn. i. p. 433 (1831.)

Genus Scaphidurus, Swains. Faun. Bor. Am. ii. p. 494 (1831) and Scaphidura, Swains. Cab. Cy. p. 273 (1837), but not Philos. Mag. 1827, p. 436, which is *Quiscalus*.

This is a group easily distinguished generically, especially by the strong bill flattened above, and in adult plumage by the somewhat lengthened and probably partially erectile plumage of the neck. The color is black in all the species, and in my opinion is always lustrous in the adults of both sexes. In the young of all species known to me the color is dull or plain black. Specimens in plumages not mature are much the more common in all collections, and such have been repeatedly described, but very doubtfully to the comfort of the student. It is quite impossible for me to coincide with those authors who regard this group as but one species, and that by a name which is of quite doubtful application to any!

1. CASSIDIX ATER (Vieillot.)

Cassicus ater, Vieill. Nouv. Dict. v. p. 363 (1816.)

Psarocolius palliatus, Wagler Syst. Av. No. 4 (1827.)

Del Grande, Azara, Apunt. Hist. Nat. Paraguay, i. p. 273.

Scaphidura barita, Swains. Cab. Cy. p. 301 (1838.)

Scaphidura crassirostra, Swains. Cab. Cy. p. 301?

This seems to be the most common species of South America. Specimens now before me are from Brazil, Cayenne, Ecuador and New Grenada, and are quite identical with each other throughout, and in my opinion different specifically from the species of Central America and Mexico, though about the same size.

Large, entirely black, the upper parts having a fine bronzed yellowish and greenish lustre, becoming violet on the rump and upper tail coverts. Bill very strong and wide at base, curved in its upper outline, pointed, flat above and extended into the frontal plumage, terminating in a semicircle. Plumage of the neck rather full and long, and partially erectile. Wing long, pointed, first quill longest, tail moderate or rather long, rounded, feet and legs strong, claws sharp.

Total length about 14 to 16 inches, wing 7 to 8, tail 6 to 6½ inches (adult).

1866.]

Hab.—Brazil, Ecuador. Probably inhabits nearly all of South America. Spec. in Mus. Acad., Philada., and Smiths. Mus., Washington.

Easily distinguished from the species immediately succeeding (*C. Mexicanus*) by the bronzed and yellowish lustre of the upper parts in the adult, which is always present but varies much in extent (in the adult plumage only). The entire head is fine blue, and the under parts have a yellowish violet lustre; wings and tail purplish black. The bronzed lustre of the upper parts varies according to age or stage of plumage, and is frequently restricted to a wide transverse band across the upper part of the back and neck behind, and is totally wanting in the young bird. The entire plumage in this species has fine brilliant lustres, as herein described, except the wings and tail, which are rich purplish black.

The young in this species has the bill always thick and strong, though not so long as in the adult. The entire plumage (in the young) is brownish black, frequently with the tips and edges of feathers showing some lustre. Total length of young usually about 12 inches. The two descriptions of Mr. Swainson, cited above, I regard as very probably those of the adult and young of this species.

2. CASSIDIX MEXICANUS, Lesson.

Cassidix mexicanus, Less. Traite d'Orn. i. p. 433 (1831.)

"*Corvus mexicanus*, Gm." Less. ut sup.

Corvus mexicanus, Gm. Syst. Nat. i. p. 375?

This is apparently an abundant species of Mexico and Central America. Specimens in the Smithsonian Museum, from Mexico and Guatemala, and in Mr. Lawrence's collection from Panama. It is easily distinguished, in adult plumage, from the preceding by its fine violet purple lustre, nearly uniform on the upper and under parts of the body (not bronzed yellowish and greenish, as in the preceding, *C. ater*).

Large, entirely black, with a fine violet purple lustre on the body above and below; head bluish violet; wings and tail fine purplish or greenish black. Bill very strong, thick, curved in its upper outline, pointed, flat above and extended into the frontal plumage, ending in a semicircle; wing long, pointed, with the second quill slightly longest; tail rather long, rounded; feet and legs strong; claws curved, sharp. Total length 14 to 15 inches, wing $7\frac{1}{2}$ to 8, tail 6 to $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

Young. Bill thick and strong as in the adult, but shorter; entire plumage dull brownish black, or with feathers edged and tipped with the lustres of the adult. Total length usually 12 or 13 inches.

About the same size or slightly smaller than the preceding, with the legs and feet rather stronger. Easily distinguished in adult plumage, but the two species are very similar and scarcely distinguishable in young plumage, both being nearly uniform brownish black. This is very probably the species named by Lesson, as above, but whether it is the *Corvus mexicanus*, Gmelin, may be difficult to determine.

Hab.—Mexico, Central America. Spec. in Mus. Acad., Philada., and Mus. Smiths. Inst., Washington.

3. CASSIDIX ORYZIVORUS (Gmelin).

Oriolus oryzivorus, Gm. Syst. Nat. i. p. 386 (1788).

The Rice Oriole, Lath. Gen. Syn. i. p. 423.

Gray Gen. ii. pl. 84?

This is a species much smaller than either of the preceding, and is, perhaps, that figured by Mr. George Robert Gray in his great work, "The Genera of Birds," as above cited. For the purpose of more fully understanding this species, I copy the original description of Latham, on the faith of which, only, Gmelin gave the name:—

"Length *nine inches*. Bill an inch and a half long, black, stout, sharp, a very little bent at the tip; flat on the top towards the base, where it is round-

[Dec.

ed, and passes far back on the forehead, and is there a little protuberant like the former ones: the general color of the plumage is black; the head, neck and breast have a fine purple gloss; the whole wing, and rest of the body, black; the tail consists of twelve feathers, and was five inches in length, *but had been longer*, as the ends were spoiled; the wings reached a little beyond the insertion of the tail; the legs were wanting."

"I found this species in the collection of Miss Blomefield; it was supposed to come from Cayenne. A label annexed gave it the name of *Oiseau de Ris de grosse espece*."

At present I have seen, in adult plumage, no specimen small enough to be properly or without misgiving regarded as the species described by Latham, nor do I quite understand the "protuberant" character of the bill as stated by him. Further, in all specimens that I have seen the wings reach so far beyond the insertion of the tail that his description in that particular is by no means applicable, and on the whole I am not without suspicion that this description is not of a bird of the genus *Cassidix* at all. This description is the sole foundation of the species, if such it is, and the name, as given by Gmelin on the faith of it, has been applied by nearly all late authors, evidently on the supposition that there is one species only extant, which supposition I regard as erroneous, and as probably so, the application of this name.

At present (assuming that this may be a species of *Cassidix*), two specimens now before me, it is possible to refer to it, and so also is the bird figured by Mr. Gray, as above. The two specimens before me are in young plumage, and are the smallest of this genus that I have ever seen. The bill is smaller and more slender than in either of the preceding, especially the upper mandible. One specimen from the collection of my friend Mr. Lawrence, of New York, is adolescent, the plumage on the body showing some edgings of purple lustre, nearly uniform above and below. This specimen is from Brazil; the other specimen is in the Acad. Mus., and without label, stating locality. It is nearly uniform brownish black, as in young birds of other species of this genus, but with numerous traces of bluish purple lustre.

Mr. Gray's figure, which I regard as probably representing the nearly adult of the same species as the two young birds here mentioned, is that of a bird about 10½ inches in total length, of nearly uniform bluish purple color. The young bird in the Acad. Mus. measures, total length 10 inches, wing 6, tail 4¼ inches.

4. *CASSIDIX VIEILLIOTI* (Bonaparte).

Scaphidurus Vieilloti, Bonap. Cons. Av. i. p. 426 (1850).

In the very extensive and valuable collection of birds of Central and South America now belonging to the Smithsonian Institution, I find one specimen, which, though in young plumage, may be different from either of the species above mentioned. It is labelled, in the handwriting of Mr. Jules Verreaux, "*Scaphidurus Vieilloti*, Bonap.," and the conclusion of that most accurate and excellent ornithologist is always entitled to great respect and consideration. The following is Bonaparte's diagnosis:—

"*Sc. Vieilloti*, Bp. (*Cassicus niger*? Vieill.) Gal. Ois. t. 89? ex Cayenna, Antillis. Mus. Darmstadt. *Statura media, remigibus primis quatuor apice emarginato dilitatis*."

This specimen is in young plumage, being nearly uniform brownish black, the bill slender, comparatively, and more narrow above than in any other I have seen. The primaries are wide, but not especially so at their ends, and have a slight emarginate character at their tips. Total length about 11½ inches, wing 5½, tail 4½ inches. "Young male."

At present I regard this as the fourth species of *Cassidix* with which I am acquainted.

The Annual Reports of the Librarian and Curators were read, as follows:

1866.]